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ABSTRACT

Research on the transition to remarriage and stepfamily formation has focused upon sociodemographic factors, the relationship between remarriage and the well-being of individual family members, and stepfamily integration. This study examined recently remarried mothers' perceptions of stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' role behaviors, role meanings, and grandmothering styles with their grandchildren and stepgrandchildren. Subjects (N=62) were women in remarried families. From the sample of 62 mothers, perceptions of 248 grandmother/grandchild and stepgrandmother/stepgrandchild relationships were examined. Mothers' perceptions of stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' relationships with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren were assessed using a questionnaire based on Robertson's study of grandmother/grandchild relations. The results provided considerable support for the hypotheses that higher levels of role behaviors and role meaning would be perceived in grandmother/grandchild relations than in stepgrandmother/stepgrandchild relations. Mothers perceived differences in relationships with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren during the early years of stepfamily life. (ABL)

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Stepgrandmothers and Grandmothers of Stepfamilies: Role Behaviors, Role Meanings, and Grandmothering Styles*

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Stepgrandmothers and Grandmothers of Stepfamilies: Role Behaviors, Role Meanings, and Grandmothering Styles*

Abstract

Based upon family stress theory, perceptions of stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' roles with grandchildren and stepgrandchildren may be expected to impact stepfamily integration. To begin to address this issue, recently remarried mothers' perceptions of grandmother/grandchild and stepgrandmother/stepgrandchild relations were examined. The results provided considerable support for the hypotheses that higher levels of role behaviors and role meaning would be perceived in grandmother/grandchild relations than in stepgrandmother/stepgrandchild relations. Implications for stepfamilies, family life practioners, and further research are discussed.

Key Words: stepgrandmothers, grandmothers, stepgrandchildren, grandchildren, stepfamilies

Stepgrandmothers and Grandmothers of Stepfamilies: Role Behaviors, Role Meanings, and Grandmothering Styles*

During the past decade family researchers and practioners have been active in seeking ways to enhance stepfamily adaptation. Research on the transition to remarriage and stepfamily formation has focused upon sociodemographic factors, the relationship between remarriage and the well-being of individual family members (i.e., husband, wife, and children), and stepfamily integration (Chilman, 1983; Spanier & Furstenberg, 1987). Family therapists and practioners have attended to issues in stepfamily adaptation and to enhancing the functioning of indiviudal stepfamily members and the stepfamily unit (e.g., Coleman & Ganong, 1985; Visher & Visher, 1979, 1982, 1988; Wald, 1981). Yet, within both the research and applied literature minimal attention has been given to the roles of the extended family members (e.g., grandparents and stepgrandparents) in stepfamily formation. The present study begins to address this gap in the literature by examining recently remarried mothers' perceptions of stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' role behaviors, role meanings, and grandmothering styles with their grandchildren and stepgrandchildren.

According to family stress theory, transitions such as the formation of a stepfamily system challenge families with new stressors that must be successfully managed for families to function effectively (McCubbin & Patterson, 1983; McCubbin, Thompson, Pirner, & McCubbin, 1988). Stressful aspects of remarriage that require family coping and adaptation include the

addition of new family members and role ambiguity for stepfamily members (Crosbie-Burnett, 1989). White and Booth (1985), for example, found that stepchildren serve as a significant source of stress for remarried couples. An important aspect of role ambiguity arises for remarried couples with children from previous relationships as they face the developmental challenge of balancing existing grandparent/grandchild relationships with new stepgrandparent/stepgrandchild relations. This challenge is highlighted by Furstenberg and Spanier's (1984, p. 152) conclusion that during stepfamily formation children experience an "augmentation and expansion" in kin networks through the addition of stepgrandparents, rather than a "replacement or substitution" of exisiting grandparents.

It is common for children in stepfamilies to have four biological grandparents and four stepgrandparents (assuming each parent has remarried only once and that all grandparents and stepgrandparents are living and still in their first marriages). With such complex kin networks, newly formed stepfamilies face the task of integrating a variety of individuals into the extended family system (Visher & Visher, 1988). In addition to issues the immediate stepfamily must resolve regarding the increased kin network, stepgrandparents and grandparents are challenged with adapting to this changed extended family constellation (Duffy, 1982; Furstenberg, 1987; Furstenberg & Spanier, 1984; Henry & Ceglian, 1989; Kalish & Visher, 1982). In turn, the manner in which stepgrandparents and stepgrandparents redefine their roles has implications for stepfamily adaptation.

Existing studies of stepgrandparents' and grandparents' relationships with their stepgrandchildren and grandchildren have tended to be part of larger studies on remarriage (e.g., Furstenberg & Spanier, 1984) or grandparenting (e.g., Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1986). Several scholars have addressed the transitions in relationships between grandparents and grandchildren as parental divorce occurs (Ahrons & Bowman, 1982; Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1986; Gladstone, 1988; Johnson, 1985; Johnson & Barer, 1987; Kalish & Visher, 1982; Matthews & Sprey, 1984). Furstenberg, Nord, Peterson, and Zill (1983), for example, found that after parental divorce maternal grandparent/grandchild relations were typically maintained or strengthened while paternal grandparent/grandchild relations were frequently weakened.

However, less is known about grandparent/grandchild relationships after grandchildren enter new family systems through the remarriage of their parents (Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1986; Kalish & Visher, 1982). When the extended family system includes stepgrandparents, the stepfamily members face the challenge of realigning extended kin networks to accomodate new members. The nature of relationships between grandparents and grandchildren and stepgrandparents and stepgrandchildren in the early years of stepfamily formation merits further examination. To investigate this issue, it is helpful to refer to studies of grandparent/grandchild relations that have demonstrated differences in grandparenting styles (Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1985; Kivnick, 1982; Neugarten & Weinstein, 1964; Robertson,

1977). Wide variations have been found in how grandparents enact grandparental roles (Blieszner, 1986). In addition, differences have been found in the interactions of grandmothers and grandfathers with their grandchildren (Hagestad, 1985). Thus, it is consider stepgrandmothers and grandmothers as distinct from stepgrandfathers and grandfathers.

One of the most productive means of examining grandmother/grandchild relations has been Robertson's (1971; 1977) model of role behaviors and role meanings as separate dimensions of grandmothering roles. A distinction is made between instrumental and expressive role behaviors of grandmothers with their grandchildren. Instrumental roles refer to shared activities emphasizing teaching (e.g., skills, family history, or religious matters), child caretaking (e.g., babysitting, providing recreational activites), regular visits with grandchildren, and providing financial assistance or gifts for grandchildren. Expressive roles refer to nurturant or supportive behaviors toward grandchildren (e.g., helping grandchildren with emergencies, advising grandchildren on personal or family problems; Robertson, 1977).

In addition to grandmothers' role behaviors, Robertson (1977) examined the role meanings (i.e., social and personal role meanings) experienced by grandmothers with respect to their grandchildren. Social role meanings refer to the aspects of relationships that reflect the social norms and help meet the needs of society (e.g., setting an example of moral behavior for grandchildren). In contrast, personal role meanings refer to the

relative importance of meeting individual needs through relationships (e.g., feeling young again because of relationships with grandchildren). Robertson (1977) identified four grandmothering styles that incorporated combinations of personal and social role meanings: (a) the Apportioned style of grandmothers demonstrated concern for being role models for their grandchildren while being supportive and sometimes indulgent (i.e., high personal and social role meanings); (b) the Remote style of grandmothers had few expectations for their grandchildren and little social or personal involvement with them (i.e., low personal and social role meanings); (c) the Individualized style of grandmothers emphasized personal satisfaction in relationships with their grandchildren, with little concern for social expectations (i.e., high personal and low social meanings), and (d) the Symbolic style of grandmothers were concerned with presenting a moral role model for their grandchildren and tended not to seek personal satisfaction through grandmothering roles (i.e., high social and low personal role meanings).

Although Robertson's (1977) initial study examined grandmothers' perceptions of their own role behaviors and role meanings, subsequent research has examined the perspective of young adult grandchildren (Hartshorne & Manaster, 1982). Of particular relevance to the present study was Sanders and Trygstad's (1989) application of Robertson's (1977) work to young adults' views of their relationships with grandparents and stepgrandparents. Results indicated that the young adults

attributed greater social and personal role meaning to grandparents than to stepgrandparents (Sanders & Trystad, 1989). Yet, no examination has been made of grandmothers' role behaviors and role meanings from the perspective perspective of the middle generation.

Previous literature on grandparent/grandchild relations has demonstrated that parents often mediate relationships between grandchildren and grandparents (Barranti, 1985, Robertson, 1975). Likewise, it may be expected that the middle generation also mediates relationships between stepgrandchildren and grandparents (Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1986; Furstenberg, 1987; Furstenberg & Spanier, 1984; Sanders & Trygstad, 1989). This study was designed to determine whether mothers in remarried families perceived differences in stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' relationships with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren. Specifically, the hypotheses proposed that mothers in stepfamilies would perceive higher levels of role behaviors (i.e., instrumental and expressive) and role meanings (i.e., social and personal) in grandmothers toward grandchildren than in stepgrandmothers toward stepgrandchildren. In addition, relationship type (i.e., mother's mother/mother's child, mother's mother/husband's child, husband's mother/mother's child, and husband's mother/husband's child) was expected to be a significant predictor of grandmothering style.

Method

Subjects

The sample consisted of women in remarried families with the following characteristics: (a) at least one spouse in the marriage had been previously married, (b) neither the husband or wife had been married more than once before the current marriage, (c) both the wife and husband were less than 46 years of age at the time of the marriage, (d) the current marriage had occurred within five years of the time the data was collected, (e) both the husband and wife had at least one child before the current marriage. An initial group of 431 potential subjects was identified through examining the marriage licenses (dated July 1982 through July 1986) in three eastern South Dakota counties. Since the marriage licenses did not record whether either the wife or husband had children before the present marriage, the initial group included all women whose families met the other selection criteria. Each of the potential subjects received a description of the project and the questionnaire in the mail and were informed if they returned the completed questionnaire the would receive an information booklet on stepfamilies. A total of 188 questionnaires were returned (including 90 returned due to either an incorrect address or cases where neither spouse had children prior to the current marriage) producing a usable sample of 62 mothers. From this sample of 62 mothers, perceptions of 248 grandmother/grandchild and stepgrandmother/stepgrandchild relationships were examined.

The mean age of the sujects was 36.87, while the mean age of their husbands was 38.64. The subjects reported a mean number of years in the current marriage as 2.71. The mean number of years as a single parent for the subjects was 4.50, while the mean number of years as a single parent for their husbands was 4.46. Annual family income levels were as follows: 3% below $10,000, 12% between $10,000 and $20,000, 49% between $20,000 and $30,000, 35% between 40,000 and $75,000, and less than 1% over $75,000. Eighty-six percent (86%) of the subjects were employed full or part-time, while 97% of their husbands were employed full time.

The maternal grandmothers considered in the study had a mean age of 60.41, while the paternal grandmothers had a mean age of 65.44. The maternal grandmothers had a median of 7 grandchildren and 2 stepgrandchildren. The paternal grandmothers had a median of 8 grandchildren and 2 stepgrandchildren.

The mean age of the mothers' children examined in the study was 13.4, while the mean age of the husbands' children examined was 13.8. Fifty-three percent (53%) were male and 47% were female. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the mothers' children resided primarily in the home and 25% resided primarily outside of the home. Thirty percent (30%) of the fathers' children lived primarily in the home and 69.7% lived primarily outside of the home.

Measurement

Mothers' perceptions of stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' relationships with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren were assessed using a questionnaire developed based upon Robertson's

(1971) study of grandmother/grandchild relations. The items on Robertson's (1971) interview schedule were translated from questions asked of grandmothers to a Likert-type format to be answered by mothers about stepgrandmothers and grandmothers. The questionnaire, the Mothers' Survey about Biological and Stepgrandmothers (MSBS) was used to ask mothers to report their perceptions of four sets of relationships (i.e., mother's mother with grandchild, mother's mother with stepgrandchild, father's mother with grandchild, father's mother with stepgrandchild). Mothers were instructed to respond to four scales (i.e., instrumental role behaviors, expressive role behaviors, social role meanings, and personal role meanings) with respect to their perceptions of stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' relationships with a specific child and stepchild in the stepfamily who were closest in age. The questionnaire also contained standard fact sheet items to assess sociodemographic variables.

The instrumental role behavior (IRB) scale consisted of 9 Likert-type items asking mothers' percpetions of the stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' amount of time and activities shared with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren. Sample items were as follows: (a) This grandmother often takes this child on trips such as shopping, the zoo, movies, circus, etc. (b) This grandmother has told this child about family history or customs. The internal consistency reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for the IRB scale was .94.

The expressive role behavior (ERB) scale consisted of 4 Likert-type items asking mothers' percpetions of the

stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' degree of involvement with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren in the areas helping or advising a specific child. Sample items were as follows: (a) This grandmother has advised this grandchild on religious matters. (b) This grandmother has helped this grandchild with emergencies, such as sickness, finanacial troubles, troubles with parents or friends. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbachs'alpha) for the ERB scale was .91.

The social role meaning (SRM) scale consisted of 5 Likert-type items asking mothers' percpetions of stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' expectations for family roles with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren. Sample items were as follows: (a) This grandmother sets a good example for this grandchild of what is morally right. (b) This grandmother thinks it is important for this grandchild to "respect his/her elders". The internal consistency reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for the SRM scale was .91.

The personal role meaning (PRM) scale consisted of 5 Likert-type items asking mothers' percpetions of the stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' personal relationships with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren. Sample items were as follows: (a) This grandmother feels young again because of her relationship with this grandchild. (b) This grandmother expects future generations of her family to be carried on by this grandchild. The internal consistency reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for the PRM scale was .93.

Based upon responses to the SRM and PRM scales, grandmothering styles were established in each stepgrandmother/stepgrandchild and grandmother/grandchild dyads according to Robertson's (1977) typology. A sample specific median split was used to identify high and low scores on the SRM (median = 9) and PRM (median = 16) scales. Stepgrandmothers and grandmothers rated as high on both the SRM and PRM scales were identified as using an apportioned grandmothering style, while those low on both the SRM and PRM were identified as having a remote grandmothering style. Stepgrandmothers and grandmothers who scored high on the PRM and low on the SRM were identified as using an individualized grandmothering style, while those rating high on the SRM and low on the PRM were characterized by the symbolic grandmothering style.

Analysis

One-way analysis of variance was used to examine whether the means differed among the subjects' perceptions of role behaviors (i.e., instrumental and expressive) and role meanings (ie., social and personal) four relationship types (i.e., mother's mother/mother's child, mother's mother/husband's child, husband's mother/mother's child, husband's mother/husband's child). For the three variables that demonstrated significant differences among the means, the Tukey-b test and corresponding means were used to determine within which relationships mothers' perceived greater levels among the dependent variables. A chi-squared analysis was used to determine whether significant differences were present among mothers' perceptions of grandmothering styles

were present among mothers' perceptions of grandmothering styles among the four relationship types. A lambda statistic was calculated to determine the proportional reduction in error in predicting grandmothering styles within relationship types. Percentages of grandmothering styles within each relationship type were examined.

Results

Role Behaviors and Relationship Type

The hypotheses that mothers would percieve both their mothers and their husbands' mothers to demonstrate greater instrumental role behaviors with grandchildren than with stepgrandchildren and that both the mothers' children and husbands' children would be perceived to receive greater instrumental role behaviors from grandmothers than stepgrandmothers received partial support. Among the relationship types, mean scores on the perceptions of instrumental role behaviors differed significantly ($F = 4.90$, $p < .0025$, see Table 1). Results of the Tukey-b multiple comparison test revealed a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the mean scores for instrumental role behaviors in two sets of dyads. Specifically, mothers perceived their husbands' mothers to demonstrate significantly greater ($p < .05$) instrumental role behaviors toward their husbands' children than toward the mothers' children. Further, mothers reported that their children received significantly greater ($p < .05$) instrumental role behaviors from grandmothers than from stepgrandmothers.

The hypotheses that mothers would perceive both their mothers and their husbands' mothers to demonstrate greater expressive role behaviors with grandchildren than with stepgrandchildren and that both the mothers' children and their husbands' children would be perceived to receive greater expressive role behaviors from grandmothers than stepgrandmothers received considerable support. Mean scores on the perceptions of expressive role behaviors differed significantly among the relationship types ($F = 12.76$, $p < .0000$, see Table 1). Results of the Tukey-b multiple comparison test revealed a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the mean scores for expressive role behaviors in several dyads. Specifically, mothers reported both their mothers and their husbands' mothers demonstrated significantly greater ($p < .05$) expressive role behaviors toward grandchildren than toward stepgrandchildren. Futher, mothers reported both their children and their husbands' children received a significantly greater degree ($p < .05$) of expressive role behaviors from grandmothers than from stepgrandmothers.

Role Meanings, Grandmothering Styles, and Relationship Type

No support was provided for the hypotheses that that mothers would percieve both their mothers and their husbands' mothers to attribute greater social role meaning to relationships with grandchildren than to relationships with stepgrandchildren and that both the husbands' and mothers' children would be perceived to represent greater social role meaning to grandmothers than to stepgrandmothers (see Table 1). In contrast, the hypotheses that mothers would percieve both their mothers and their husbands'

husbands' and mothers' children would be percieved to represented greater personal role meaning to grandmothers than to their stepgrandmothers received substantial support. Among the relationship types, mean scores on the perceptions of personal role meanings differed significantly ($F = 9.69$ $p < .0000$, see Table 1). Results of the Tukey-b multiple comparison test revealed a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the mean scores for personal role meaning among several dyads. Specifically, mothers reported that both their mothers and their husbands' mothers attributed significantly greater ($p < .05$) personal role meaning to relationships with grandchildren than in relationships with stepgrandchildren. Further, mothers reported both their children and their husbands' children represented significantly greater ($p < .05$) personal role meaning for grandmothers than for stepgrandmothers.

Mothers perceived significant differences among grandmothering styles within the four relationship types ($\chi^2 = 23.80$, $p < .005$). The lambda statistic revealed that accurately predicting the grandmothering style by knowing the relationship type decreased the proportion of error by 6.2% ($\lambda = .062$). Percentages demonstrated the apportioned style was the most common grandmothering style in the mother's mother/mother's child (48.2%) and the husband's mother/husband's child dyads (49.2%; see Table 2). In contrast, the remote style was the most common style in the mother's mother/husband's child dyad (41.5%; see Table 2). In the husband's mother/mother's child dyad the apportioned style was the most common (31.5%), closely followed

by the remote style (29.6%; see Table 2). Other percentages of grandmothering styles within the relationship types are reported in Table 2.

Discussion

The results of this study provided considerable support for the proposals that mothers in recently formed stepfamilies would perceive differences in the role behaviors, role meanings, and grandmothering styles in their mothers and their husbands' mothers' relationships with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren. Consistent with Sanders and Trygstad's (1989) study of young adult grandchildrens' and stepgrandchildrens' views of their relationships with stepgrandmothers and grandmothers, mothers perceived differences in relationships with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren during the early years of stepfamily life.

Role Behavior and Relationship Types

Several findings indicated mothers perceived greater role behaviors in grandmother/grandchild than in stepgrandmother/stepgrandchild relations. For example, mothers perceived the instrumental role behaviors of their husbands' mothers to be greater toward the husbands' children (i.e., grandchildren) than toward the mothers' children (i.e., stepgrandchildren). Yet, mothers did not perceive a significant difference in the instrumental role behaviors of their mothers with respect to grandchildren and stepgrandchildren. This discrepancy parallels the previously documented greater "kinkeeping" roles of wives in families (Rosenthal, 1985). Wives typically retain closer ties to their families of origin (particular to their mothers) than

husbands maintin toward their families (Aldous, 1967) and the middle generation typically mediates relationships between grandmothers and grandchildren (Robertson, 1975). Therefore, the caretaking ties (such as instrumental role behaviors) between mothers' mothers and stepgrandchildren tended to be greater than those between husbands' mothers and stepgrandchildren.

A second dimension of role behaviors, expressive role behaviors, were more common between grandmothers and grandchildren than between stepgrandmothers and stepgrandchildren. These findings provide support for extending the "myth of instant love" (Visher & Visher, 1979) to relationships between stepgrandmothers and stepgrandchildren. One of the common difficulties in stepfamily adjustment is the assumption that stepfamily formation leads to immediate feelings of love among stepfamily members (Visher & Visher, 1979). Within the present study, the mean ages of children and stepchildren were in early adolescence, while the mean number of years in the stepfamily was less than three years. Thus, grandmothers and grandchildren had more than four times as long to develop bonds as stepgrandmothers and stepgrandchildren. The demonstration of expressive role behaviors such as giving gifts or providing support emerge as grandmothers and grandchildren have time to develop affectional bonds. Likewise, stepfamily members need to provide opportunties for bonding to occur between stepgrandmothers and stepgrandchildren in an environment that promote sharing in enjoyable activites, but does not require "instant love".

Role Meanings, Grandmothering Styles and Relationship Types

Another set of findings indicated personal role meanings were greater in grandmothers relationships with grandchildren than in stepgrandmothers relationships with stepgrandchildren. Since personal role meaning refers to the extent to which grandmothers or stepgrandmothers rely upon relationships with grandchildren and stepgrandchildren to meet their individual needs (Robertson, 1977), the longer kinship ties in the grandmother/grandchild relationship provide a more solid foundations for such expectations. Further, stepgrandparents face a set of developmental challenges in the transition to stepgrandparenthood that must be resolved to allow relationships to develop with their stepgrandchildren (Henry & Ceglian, 1989).

Another dimension of role meanings, social role meanings, was not a significant predictor of differences among relationship types when considered alone. However, the relevance of social role meanings became more apparent when used in combination with personal role meanings to determine grandmothering styles (Robertson, 1977). For example, the apportioned grandmothering style was the most common style for both the for both the husbands' mothers and mothers' mothers in relation to grandchildren. However, different grandmothering styles were found to be the most common for mothers' mothers and husbands' mothers with stepgrandchildren. The mothers' mothers were perceived to demonstrate the remote style most often with stepgrandchildren, whereas, husbands' mothers were commonly reported to demonstrate high frequencies of both the apportioned

and remote styles with stepgrandchildren. This difference may be explained by the greater tendency of the husbands' children to reside with their mothers (Bachrach, 1983), resulting in stronger grandmother/grandchild bonds of the husbands' children with their maternal grandmothers (Furstenberg et al, 1983) and providing less contact with stepgrandmothers. Results indicated that knowing the relationship type (i.e., mother's mother/mother's child, mother's mother/husband's child, husband's mother/mother's child, husband's mother/husband's child) significantly helped predict the grandmothering type.

The interpretations drawn from this study about grandmothering styles are limited by the fact that sample specific median splits (i.e., on the social and personal role meaning scales) were used to determine the grandmothering types due to the lack of standardized norms. Until norms are developed, future studies may be enhanced by supplementing self-report questionnaires with qualitative interviews to more clearly establish characteristics of stepgrandmothers and grandmothers within each grandmothering style.

Despite the logical pattern of these results, however, reference should be made to certain methodological and sample limitations that may restrict the generalizability of these findings. One important limitation was that the present sample (i.e., mothers in recently remarried families in rural communities and small cities) may not apply to stepgrandmothers and grandmothers with other sociodemographics. Further, since the data were collected from the perspective of the middle

generation it is possible that the mothers' attitudes about stepfamily expectations influenced the results. However, based upon family stress theory (McCubbin & Patterson, 1983; McCubbin et al., 1988) the way that family members define the relationships will impact the manner in which stepfamily adaptation occurs. Therefore, it is important to understand how mothers in stepfamilies perceive stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' relationships with grandchildren and stepgrandchildren to determine the impact such relationships will have on stepfamily adjustment. Additional studies are needed to determine how these relationships are viewed by other members of stepfamily systems (e.g., grandmothers, stepgrandmothers, grandchildren, stepgrandchildren).

Implications for Family Life Professionals

Professionals who work with stepfamily integration issues should assess the impact of stepgrandmothers' and grandmothers' relationships with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren on stepfamily adaptation. Based upon this study, stepgrandmothers and grandmothers are likely to interact differently with their stepgrandchildren and grandchildren. Thus, educational and theraputic interventions may be needed to help stepfamily members understand that it is common for stepgrandmothers and grandmothers to view their relationships with stepgrandchildren and grandchildren in different ways.

A second implication of the study is that bonding between stepgrandmothers and stepgrandchildren should not be expect to develop quickly. Stepfamily members may be encouraged to

particiate in activites that facilitate bonding and to accept that the bonds may never be strong between stepgrandparents and stepgrandchildren (Henry & Ceglian, 1989).

Although differences in grandmothering styles among the relationship types were found, the extent to which the relationship type predicted grandmothering style was low enough that additional factors need to examined to more fully explain variablility in grandmothering styles for stepgrandmothers and grandmothers of stepfamilies. Other issues to be considered by practioners and researchers include the amount of contact between the generations (Gladstone, 1988) and lifestyle factors in the stepgrandmothers and grandmothers' lives such as the amount of employment status, age, education, number of grandchildren and stepgrandchildren, life satisfaction, and other activites (Robertson, 1977). Further, family stress theory (McCubbin & Patterson, 1983) indicates that the relationships of stepgrandmothers and grandmothers with their stepgrandchildren and grandchildren may differ according to whose perception is considered. Family life practioners and researchers need to be aware the same relationships may be viewed very differently by mothers, fathers, grandmothers, stepgrandmothers, and children in stepfamilies.

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Table 1

Comparison of Role Behaviors and Role Meanings by Relationship Type

	Mother's Mother/ Mother's Child		Mother's Mother/ Husband's Child		Husband's Mother/ Mother's Child		Husband's Mother/ Husband's Child		
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F-Values
Role Behaviors									
Instrumental[a]	28.23	9.40	31.90	11.21	33.64	9.38	27.48	10.72	4.90*
Expressive[b]	12.08	5.20	16.46	4.11	15.27	4.36	12.58	5.02	12.76**
Role Meanings									
Social[c]	9.54	3.86	10.79	5.31	10.05	4.62	9.31	4.36	1.36
Personal[d]	13.37	5.38	17.74	5.87	16.70	5.62	13.65	4.95	9.69**

[a] n=247; [b] n=246; [c] n=246; [d] n=237.
*p < .0025; **p < .0000.

Table 2

Number and Percentages of Grandmothering Styles by Relationship Type

Grandmothering Style	Relationship Type				
	Mother/s Mother/ Mother's Child	Mother's Mother/ Husband's Child	Husband's Mother Mother's Child	Husband's Mother Husband's Child	Total
Apportioned	27[a] (48.2%)[b]	18 (27.7%)	17 (31.5%)	31 (49.2%)	93 (39.1%)[c]
Remote	12 (21.4%)	27 (41.5%)	16 (29.6%)	10 (15.9%)	65 (27.3%)
Individualized	12 (21.4%)	7 (10.8%)	8 (14.8%)	15 (23.8%)	42 (17.6%)
Symbolic	5 (8.9%)	13 (20.0%)	13 (24.1%)	7 (11.1%)	38 (16.0%)
Total	56	65	54	63	238

[a]Number of grandmothers reported to use this grandmothering style.
[b]Percentage of grandmothers within this relationship type reported to use this grandmothering style.
[c]Percentage of total group of grandmothers reported to use this grandmothering style.